



Tropical Definitions

Tropical Cyclone: A generic term for a non-frontal synoptic scale cyclone originating over tropical or subtropical waters with organized convection and a definite cyclonic (counter-clockwise) surface wind circulation.

Tropical Depression: A tropical cyclone in which the maximum one-minute sustained surface wind is 38 mph (33 kts) or less.

Tropical Storm: A tropical cyclone in which the maximum one-minute sustained surface wind ranges from 39 to 73 mph (34 to 63 kts) inclusive.

Hurricane/Typhoon: A tropical cyclone in which the maximum one-minute sustained surface wind is 74 mph (64 kts) or greater. "Typhoon" is the term used for hurricane-strength tropical cyclones in the western Pacific Ocean.

Storm Surge: An abnormal rise in sea level accompanying a tropical cyclone or other intense storm. The height of the surge is computed by subtracting the "normal" astronomical tide from the observed level of the sea (storm tide).

Storm Tide: The actual level of the sea which results from the astronomical tide combined with the storm surge. (Storm Tide = Storm Surge + Astronomical Tide)